



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## Exploration and Discovery.

### JAR-HANDLES.

THE handles of large jars in Palestine were much more durable than the jar itself. A jar of the kind referred to swelled out as it rose and then drew in to form a neck which ended in a broad lip. Between this lip and the swelling side of the jar there was a handle on each side. While the walls of the jar were about a quarter of an inch thick, the handles were nearly an inch thick. It is not strange, therefore, that in heaps of potsherds the handles should be intact, or nearly so.

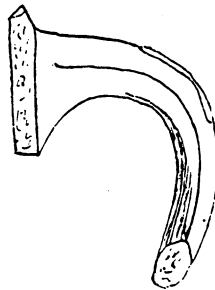
These handles have been coming to light for years. Warren found many in the shaft sunk eighty feet deep at the southeastern angle of the wall at Jerusalem, and carried some to London. Indeed, they are sometimes found on the surface. They are included in every collection of Palestinian remains, as are old coins and bits of glass.

It was customary to stamp these handles with an inscription, which was the more safe as it was so impressed as to escape being injured by anything in contact with the higher surface of the handle. This was not always skilfully done, being sometimes a little too far to one side to be evenly distinct, or again it was sometimes made not deep enough to escape injurious friction; but many handles have distinct impressions.

Some of these are in the older Hebrew and add to our stock of that writing. Dr. F. J. Bliss has found a number of them in Tell-es-Safi and other places in the vicinity, and they are of considerable variety. An interesting type is the following:

Dr. Bliss reads the upper line לַמֶּלֶךְ, "for the king," and the lower line חֶבְרוֹן, "Hebron." He regards the symbol as a scarab or Egyptian beetle. He is right in his reading, as other handles show by having the same line and the lower line indicating various places—

Shocoh, Tiph, and so on. It may be, however, that the inscription is votive or religious rather than relating to tribute, and that the symbol



is the main thing. Of course, the first line may mean "for Moloch," or it may mean "for the lord," and then the symbol may be taken to mean some attribute of a god. Baalzebub, for instance, "the lord of flies," was worshiped not far away at Ekron, and King Ahaziah sent there to consult him (2 Kings, chap. 1). The Hebrew ערב is sometimes "fly" and sometimes "beetle," and a discussion on the plague of flies or beetles may be found in the *Speaker's Commentary* on Exod. 8:21 and in the annexed essay on Egyptian words. This opens a field of study which will expand as more such handles are found and the outlines can be better made out.

In confirmation of the votive idea I have lately examined a handle in the museum of Andover Theological Seminary, Massachusetts. The stamp is rectangular and the letters are in Greek. The lower right corner is injured, but all the rest is in good condition. It may be read *Επι καλλιστου μορου*



"for the sake of the most fortunate destiny." The symbol is that of the calf or bullock which Aaron made for Israel, and which Jeroboam afterward established as the god of the northern kingdom. The jar and its contents must have been a votive offering. Dr. Selah Merrill found an altar east of the Jordan with a head just like this on its front.

Another interesting handle is to be seen in the Semitic museum of Harvard University. It has a circular stamp just an inch in diameter, and also has Greek characters.



The blank space in the circle means that the letters are wanting through the stamp being put too far to one side. Although the letters are queerly turned about, I read clearly *Ομεγας Ιερεως*, the ordinary designation of the chief priest. The missing letters, with those which remain, *αλις*, probably give the high priest's name. There was one Ishmael in our Lord's time who may be meant. This inscription might mean tribute, but relates itself to the temple worship. The symbol is either the *holab*, or bundle of palm, myrtle, and willow, of Lev. 22:40; or is the three barley heads of the Passover.

This study of jar-handles will be of great interest as indicating the religious ideas of the cities which lie in the tells, often in successive layers, like the chapters of a history.

THEODORE F. WRIGHT.